DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 278 686 TM 870 103

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TITLE Issues of Data Trustworthiness in Openly Ideological Research.
PUB DATE Apr 86
NOTE 27p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (67th, San Francisco, CA, April 16-20, 1986).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Construct Validity; *Credibility; *Data; Educational Research; *Models; *Research Methodology; Social Change; Social Science Research; Theories; *Validity; Values
IDENTIFIERS *Empirical Research

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on issues of data trustworthiness in praxis-oriented empirical work, research openly committed to the building of a world in which we can all flourish. The central argument is that those exploring the possibilities for a change-enhancing advocacy paradigm for doing empirical research in the human sciences must begin to be more systematic about establishing the trustworthiness of data. There are two assumptions basic to the argument: (1) that we are in a postpositivist period in the human sciences, a period marked by methodological and epistemological ferment, and (2) that explicitly value-based emancipatory research has an important voice to add to that ferment. After an overview of the postpositivist era, the heart of the paper focuses on three issues raised when attempting to articulate empirical accountability in praxis-oriented work: (1) the tension between advocacy and scholarship; (2) the relationship between theory and data; and (3) the criteria which can be brought to bear in judging the quality of research designed not only to understand, but also to change the maldistribution of power and resources which underlies our society. A five-page bibliography concludes the document. (LMO)

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# ISSUES OF DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS IN OPENLY IDEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

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Paper prepared for the symposium, "Issues of Data Trustworthiness and Authenticity in New Paradigm Research," at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April, 1986, San Francisco, CA.

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# ISSUES OF DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS IN OPENLY IDEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

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Paper prepared for the symposium, "Issues of Data Trustworthiness and Authenticity in New Paradigm Research, annual meeting of the American Educational Researcher's Association, April, 1986, San Francisco, California

> The attempt to produce value-neutral social science is increasingly being abandoned as at best unrealizable, and at worst self-deceptive, and is being replaced by social sciences based on explicit ideologies (Hesse, 1980, p. 247).

> Rather than being a universal principle whose validity transcends culture, the preference for value-free observation is shown to be as wholly embedded in a particular cultural history as any competing attitude. . . The state of having no values, if it exists, is just another particular condition that observers may be in. It is continuous with and on the same epistemological level as the state of having any other particular value system. There is no a priori guarantee that Vo [having no values] yields the truest view. Why may it not be the most distorted view of all? (Kukla, 1982, pp. 1015-1016).

Morgan (1983) distinguishes between positivist, phenomenological and critical/praxis-oriented research paradigms. (See, also, Habermas, 1971; Fay, 1975, 1977; Bernstein, 1976, 1983; Bredo and Feinberg, 1982.) This paper focuses on issues of data trustworthiness in praxis-oriented[1] empirical work, research openly committed to the building of a world in which we all can flourish. My central argument is that those exploring the possibilities for a change enhancing, advocacy paradigm for doing empirical research in the human sciences[2] must begin to be more systematic about establishing the trustworthiness of data. Systematizing the ambiguity of what we do as much as possible does not have to deny the essential indeterminancy of

human experiencing, "the irreducible disparity between the being of the world and the knowledge we might have of it" (White, 1973). But if we want illuminating and resonant, evocative theory grounded in trustworthy data, we must formulate self-corrective techniques that will check the credibility of our data and minimize the distorting effect of personal bias upon the logic of evidence (Kamarovsky, 1981).

The argument which follows is premised on two assumptions: that we are in a postpositivist period in the human sciences, a period marked by methodological and epistemological ferment, and that explicitly value based, emancipatory research--research as praxis[3]--has an important voice to add to that ferment. After an overview of the postpositivist era, the heart of the paper focuses on three issues raised by confronting issues of empirical accountability in praxis-oriented empirical work: the tension between advocacy and scholarship (Unger, 1982), the relationship between theory and data, and the criteria which can be brought to bear in judging the quality of research designed not only to understand but also to change the maldistribution of power and resources which underlies our society.

## The Postpositivist Era

> [T]hrough the shift from the modern to the postmodern standpoint, questions of justice have taken a place in the forum of scientific judgment alongside questions of truth (Toulmin, pointed out in Donmoyer, 1985, p.113).

Every age has its ideas about the nature of knowledge and how it can and should be acquired. Postpositivism hardly seems an adequate term for what Michael Foucault, the French "archeologist of knowledge", considers the epistemic transformation involved in

recognizing the sciences as "inherently thoroughly imbued with ideology," as being no more and no less than an example of "power-knowlege" (Sheridan, 1980). Our era is that of "the decline of the absolutes" (LeCourt, 1975, p. 49). It is the end of the quest for a "God's Eye" perspective (Smith, 1986) and the confrontation of what Bernstein calls "the Cartesian Anxiety" (1983), the lust for absolutes, the quest for certainty in our ways of knowing. Foundational views of knowledge are under attack (Bernstein, 1983; Smith, 1984, 1985; Sheridan, 1980; Gergen, 1985; Haraway, 1985), and even the "possibilities offered by relativism" (Morgan, 1983, p. 322) are beginning to be talked about.

We live in a period of dramatic shift in our understanding of scientific inquiry, an age which has learned much about the nature of science and its limitations. It is a time of demystification, of disourse which disrupts "the smooth passage of 'regimes of truth'" (Smart, 1983, p. 135) by clarifying the politics of knowledge production and legitimation (Habermas, 1971; Bernstein, 1976; Fay, 1975; Hesse, 1980). As we explore the possibilities offered by the postpositivist era, the search is for different ways of making sense of human life, for different ways of knowing which do justice to the complexity, tenuity, and indeterminancy of most of human experiencing (Mishler, 1979).

Broadly speaking, postpositivism is characterized by the following: the refutation of positivism flourishes (Bernstein, 1976, 1983; Mitroff and Kilmann, 1978); talk of a Kuhnian paradigm shift abounds (Smith, 1983; Phillips, 1983; Eisner, 1983); more interactive, contextualized, humanly compelling research methods gain increasing legitimacy (Reinharz, 1979, 1983; Reason and Rowan, 1981;

Sabia and Wallulis, 1983). Finally, as we come to see how knowledge production and legitimation are historically situated and structurally located, "scholarship that makes its biases part of its argument"[4] arises as a new contender for legitimacy.

Three research programs, feminist research[5], neo-Marxist critical ethnography, and Freirian "empowering" or participatory research, exemplify what Hesse, borrowing from Althusser,[6] terms the "epistemological break" of developing a critical social science with an emancipatory intent (1980, p. 196). Each research program opposes prevailing scientific norms as inherently supporting the status quo; each is premised upon a "transformative agenda"; each is concerned with research as praxis (Rose, 1979, p. 279).

Praxis-oriented research programs are typically discounted as overly subjective and, hence, "non-scientific". Such charges arise out of an objectivity reduced to a canonized methodology for establishing scientific knowledge (Goddard, 1973, p. 18; Cronbach, 1980). Rather than "objective" knowledge, praxis-oriented inquirers seek emancipatory knowledge. Emancipatory knowledge increases awareness of the contradictions distorted or hidden by everyday understandings. It directs attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes. Finding only what one is predisposed to look for in one's empirical work must be transcended, however, if the rampant subjectivity inherent in more phenomenological and overtly political research is not to prove its bane, as "pointless precision" (Kaplan, 1964) has of the conventional paradigm. A central task for the praxis-oriented strand of new paradigm inquirers, hence, becomes the confrontation of issues of empirical accountability.

## Issues of Validity in Praxis-Oriented Research

> [T]he central question in epistemology [is] the problem of validity of criteria of validity beyond the confines of a single theoretical system (Benton, 1977, p. 196).

As Wittig (1985) notes, there are limits to epistemological solutions to sociology of knowledge problems. If people don't share a particular epistemology, arguments about how social processes affect both the production and legitimation of knowledge carry little weight. The legitimation of methods is at least as tied to shifts in dominant epistemological frameworks over historical time as it is to the intrinsic quality of methods. Within this socio-historical context, whether those with a praxis orientation can do empirical research which appears valid from multiple points of view or whether Heron is correct that truth in research is a function of shared values (1981, p. 33) is presently a moot issue. This is especially true given the primitive state of validity discourse within emancipatory research (Feinberg, 1983; Reason and Rowan, 1981; White, 1983; Dickens, 1983, p. 151; Moon, 1983, p. 171).

While the "spectre of relativism" may be our inevitable companion as we reshape science away from its positivist incarnation (Bernstein, 1983; White, 1983, p. 170), what follows argues that <u>dialectical</u> is as much the opposite of absolute as is relative. Hence, within the meta-context which frames the issues raised in this paper, relativity can be seen as a liberal response to the crisis of absolutism (Diamond, 1981). Sarup (1983) refers to "the relativist phenomenologial position", a position premised on both a denial of the structures of privilege which sustain hegemonic control and a failure

to recognize that reality is not ever fully present to us (Smircich, 1986). Rather than dualistic worries about relativity versus absolutism, an emphasis on dialectical process seems far more fruitful in understanding life under conditions of advanced monopoly capitalism with its interplay of progressive and regressive elements far more complex than anything contemporary social theory appears yet able to envisage.

What follows is an effort to contribute to the evolving of an interactive, change enhancing, dialectical mode of doing empirical research in the human sciences. It is grounded in Krueger's recognition that "[t]here are hardly any attempts at the development of an alternative methodology in the sense of an 'emancipatory' social research to be explored and tested in substantive studies" (1981, p. 59). In this effort to help articulate the emergent praxis-oriented research paradigm, three issues are raised: the tension between advocacy and scholarship; the relationship between theory and data in research programs with strong a priori theoretical commitments, for example, neo-Marxist sociology of education; and, finally, what I call "relevant rigor", validity criteria serviceable within the context of praxis-oriented research progams.

## The Problem of Commitment

Is being value-free valuable? (Lincoln and Guba, 1985)

In contrast to Foucault who celebrates "the perspectivity of knowledge", especially that which gives expresson to subjugated knowledges (Smart, 1983, p. 77), Andy Hargreaves sees "the problem of

commitment" as at the bottom of distorted theories of schooling. His solution is "a value-free investigation of schooling" including "value-independent criteria of validity" (1982, pp.121-122). While I agree that the failure to engage theory and empirical evidence in a dialogue has led to such distorted theories as the correspondence theory of schooling and the wishful thinking which saw resistance in every inattentive student, the solution is not retrenchment in positivist ways of knowing.

The increasing legitimacy of the interpretive paradigm as a challenge to positivist orthodoxy demonstrates that educational research is not impervious to the profound crisis of established paradigms occurring across the disciplines in the human sciences (Smith, 1983; Phillips, 1983; Eisner, 1983). Additionally, new continuities among science, hermeneutics and praxis are emerging that challenge the very heart of the essential postivist insistence upon researcher value-neutrality (Bernstein, 1983). What is increasingly clear is that research paradigms inherently reflect our view of the world we live in and want to live in. To choose from among the mainstream positivist, the interpretive/phenomenological contender, or the much less developed critical or praxis-oriented paradigms is a mode of engagement with the world we study. While somewhat over the solipsistic edge, Morgan's reflection on the implications of Heisenberg's work underscores the inherently interactive nature of empirical research:

> [T]he scientist does not generate knowledge of an object world, but of his or her interaction with that world. . . science tells the scientist as much about him- or herself as it does about the phenomenon being investigated. . . in science one confronts only oneself, since one is investigating the way one has engaged the world (1983, pp.

387-388).

The praxis-oriented paradigm poses two central challenges to the interpretive paradigm. The first is the argument that explicitly value-based research open in it advocacy for the dispossessed is neither more nor less ideological than is positivist or interpretive research (Habermas, 1971; Bernstein, 1976, 1983; Bredo and Feinberg, 1982). Such research has made the "epistemological break" Hesse (1980) talks of through its argument that, "since interest-free knowledge is logically impossible, we should feel free to substitute explicit interests for implicit ones" (Reinharz, 1985, p. 17).

Openly value-laden research may, in fact, be more appropriate in the human sciences than the guise of value neutrality, as it clarifies the need for reflexivity (Wittig, 1985; Unger, 1983; Kukla, 1982). Sampson, for example, writes "the influence of this sociohistorical standpoint on knowledge is not considered a source of error. . . but as something intrinsic to all knowledge. Rather than something to be eliminated, it is something to be understood as part of the very process by which knowledge and facts are generated" (1978, p. 1334). In citing Foucault and his rigors of historical self-examination as an important ally in "the struggle against relativism", Lentricchia asks, what is the source of authority for those "who presume to speak with epistemic authority about the subjects they investigate" (1980, p. 208)? His answer is <u>not</u> neutrality, absence of passion. LeCourt (1975), too, calls for an "ardent text" (p.49): to valorize method is to miss "the real motion of knowledge" (p. 79) which is as tied to passion as to "objectivity". "[T]he role of ideology does not diminish as rigor increases and error is dissipated" (p.200). What Du

Bois (1983) calls "passionate scholarship", hence, can lead us toward the development of a self-reflexive research paradigm that no longer reduces issues of bias to a canonized method of establishing scientific knowledge.

The second challenge posed to the interpretive paradigm by praxis-oriented research programs is that reality is more than negotiated accounts, that we are both shaped by and shapers of our world. Unmediated intersubjectivity results in phenomenological reductionism: the denial of how our common sense ways of looking at the world are permeated with meanings that sustain our disempowerment (Gramsci, 1971; Salamini, 1981; Bowers, 1984). For those interested in the development of a praxis-oriented research paradigm, a key issue revolves around this second challenge: how to maximize self as mediator between people's self-understandings and the need for ideology critique and transformative social action <u>without becoming impositional</u>.

Comstock says that the critical researcher's task is to stimulate research participants into "a self-sustaining process of critical analysis and enlightened action" (1982, p. 387). Doing such work in a non-elitist and non-manipulating manner means that, rather than a "one-way propagandist", one wants to be like the Cobbett E.P. Thompson writes of who acknowleges "the aid which he is continually deriving from those new thoughts which his thoughts produce in their minds." Thompson notes, "How moving is this insight into the dialectical nature of the very process by which his own ideas were formed! For Cobbett, thought was not a system but a relationship" (1963, p. 758).

Such a relational view of knowledge production requires a reflexivity regarding how a priori theory has been changed by the

logic of the data. The search for ways to operationalize reflexivity in critical inquiry is uncharted territory. Sabia and Wallulis point out that, too often, critical self-awareness comes to mean "a negative attitude towards competing approaches instead of its own self-critical perspective" (1983, p. 26). What is needed is research designs that allow us to reflect on how our value commitments insert themselves into our empirical work. Our own frameworks of understanding need to be critically examined as we look for the tensions and contradictions they might entail (Feinberg, 1983, pp. 159-160; Bredo and Feinberg, 1982, p. 439).

The tension between advocacy and scholarship can be a fruitful one if it pushes us toward becoming vigorously self aware in our efforts to develop a praxis-oriented research paradigm. The two remaining sections of this paper will attempt to move us forward in operationalizing reflexivity in research designed not only to understand but also to change the world.

## The Theory-data Dialectic

> I do not believe that imposing Marxist rather than bourgeois categories is socialist practice (Carr-Hill, 1984, p. 290).

Praxis-oriented research programs cannot afford to deride concerns about the empirical adequacy of theories as positivism, yet the status of empirical evidence in new paradigm research is not the same as in the conventional paradigm. Morgan argues for a "more modest", more illustrative status for empirical data (1983, p. 401).

Smith asks: "To what extent does method privilege findings?" Do data driven findings carry "epistemic privilege" or are they "just another voice in the conversation" (1985, p. 11)? Bernstein (1983) notes that a suggestive, illuminative role for data may be the best that we can do. Within counter movements in the human sciences, knowledge is seen as "socially constituted, historically embedded, and valuationally based. Theory plays an agentic function, and research illustrates (vivifies) rather than provides a truth test" (Hendrick, 1983, p. 506). If one accepts this more humble role for empirical data within postpositivist research, issues arise around the relationship of theory and data, especially in research programs with strong a priori theoretical commitments.[7]

The goal of theoretically guided empirical work is to create theory which possesses "evocative power" (Morgan, 1983, p. 298) by developing increasing specificity at the contextual level in order to see how larger issues are embedded in the particulars of everyday life. Such theory resonates with people's lived concerns, fears, and aspirations; it is energizing, catalytic theory which "clicks" with the disjunctures and contradictions in people's lives. Grounded in empirical specificity and interactive reciprocity, theory becomes an expression and elaboration of progressive popular feelings rather than the imposition of intellectuals.

Building empirically grounded emancipatory theory requires a reciprocal relationship between data and theory. Data must be allowed to generate propositions in a dialectical manner that allows an a priori theoretical framework, but which keeps that framework from becoming the container into which the data must be poured. Ungrounded theory constrains the seeing process. The search is for theory which

grows out of context embedded data, not in a way that rejects a priori theory, but in a way that keeps preconceptions from distorting the logic of evidence. In his critique of Jean Anyon's work as telling us more about her predispositions than about the phenomena studied, Peter Ramsay especially critiques Anyon's certainty and clear-cutness: "While we would argue that there is no such thing as 'value-free' or objective research, we would argue that there is a need to keep as open a frame of reference as is possible to allow the data to generate the propositions" (1983, p. 316).

Theory is too often used to protect us from the awesome complexity of the world, and, yet, "the road to complexity is what we are on in our empirical efforts" (Clark, 1984, p. 49). Moving beyond predisposition requires systematizing procedures for understanding the ways that investigator values enter into research. Empirically grounding theoretical formulations necessitates a critical stance regarding the inadequacies of our pet theory and an openness to counter interpretations. Empirical evidence must be viewed as a mediator for a constant self and theoretical interrogation.

Research designs can be more or less participatory, but some amount of dialogic encounter is required if we are to operationalize the reflexivity needed to protect our research from our own enthusiasms by distinguishing between what Bernstein calls "enabling" versus "blinding" prejudices on the part of the researcher (1983, p. 128). As Fay writes:

> One test of the truth of critical theory is the considered reaction by those for whom it is supposed to be emancipatory. . . Not only must a particular theory be offered as the reason why people should change their self-understandings, but this must be done in an environment in which these people can reject this reason

(Fay, 1977, pp. 218-219, original emphasis).

The inadequacy of the interpretive, phenomenological paradigm is that it bases itself upon the postulate of rationality.[8] Neo-Marxist assumptions regarding false consciousness and ideological mystification, however, teach us that limiting analysis to actors' perceptions of their situations is inadequate. If theory is to spur toward action, it must be grounded in the self-understandings of the dispossessed even as it seeks to get them to conceive of themselves and their situations differently. This is the central paradox of critical theory and provides its greatest challenge.

There is a dialectic between people's self-understandings and efforts to provide an enabling context to question taken-for-granted beliefs and the authority culture has over us (Bowers, 1984). There, in the nexus of that dialectic, lies the opportunity to create reciprocal, dialogic research designs which both lead to self-reflection and provide a forum in which to test the usefulness, the resonance, of conceptual and theoretical formulations. Debriefing sessions with participants provide a forum for looking for exceptions to emerging generalizations. Submitting concepts and explanations to the scrutiny of social actors sets up a theoretical exchange that is at the heart of research approaches which both advance emancipatory theory and empower the researched. This, of course, requires an end to the mystificatory language which Hargreaves claims is the result of a lack of empirical substance (1982, p. 116). If theory is to explain the structural contradictions at the heart of discontent, it must speak to the felt needs of a specific group in ordinary language (Fay, 1975, p. 98).

In sum, the development of emancipatory social theory requires an empirical stance which is open-ended, dialogically reciprocal, grounded in a paradoxical respect for human capacity coupled with a profound skepticism of common sense appearances, and a commitment to the long term, broad based ideological struggle necessary to transform structural inequalities.

Relevant Rigor

> The job of validation is, not to support an interpretation, but to find out what might be wrong with it. . . To call for value-free standards of validity is a contradiction in terms, a nostalgic longing for a world that never was (Cronbach, 1980, pp. 103-105).

What does empirical rigor mean in a postpositivist context? Can we devise minumum forms of empirical adequacy or is Smith's (1985) assertion correct that establishing the validity of each study depends on its context? If criteria are, in fact, the products of the paradigms which spawn them, what are the serviceable criteria relevant to praxis-oriented research programs? As Morgan notes, not much work has gone into evolving such criteria (1983, p. 398). Our best shot at present seems to be to construct research designs that push us toward becoming vigorously self-aware.

Going beyond predisposition in our empirical efforts requires techniques that will give confidence in the trustworthiness of data. Reason and Rowan (1981) want "objectively subjective" inquiry (p. xiii). More systematically, Guba and Lincoln (1981) argue for analogues to the major criteria of rigor within the orthodox paradigm. They state that the least we should expect in establishing data

trustworthiness in new paradigm research is triangulation, reflexivity and member checks. Reason and Rowan advise borrowing concepts of validity from traditional research, but refining and expanding those concepts in ways appropriate to "an interactive, dialogic logic" (1981, p. 240). Building on all of this, what follows is a reconceptualization of validity appropriate for research openly committed to a more just social order.

Guba and Lincoln's (1981) cogent argument that the issue is data neutrality is key here. Once the issue is seen as the neutrality of data rather than researcher, unabashedly ideological research no longer need apologize for its open commitment to using research to critique and change the status quo. The central issue shifts. The onus becomes the development of data credibility checks to protect our research and theory construction from our enthusiasms. To guard against researcher biases distorting the logic of evidence within praxis-oriented research, the following guidelines are offered.

-Triangulation can help in establishing data trustworthiness, a triangulation expanded beyond the psychometric definition of multiple measures to include multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes. Theoretical pluralism, for example, "attempts to use the differences among competing perspectives as a means of constructing new modes of understanding" (Morgan, 1983, p. 379). The point is that research designs which consciously seek counter patterns as well as convergence create more credible data.

-Construct validity has its roots in theory construction (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955). Empirical work which operates from within a conscious context of theory building asks such questions as, where

are the weak points of this theoretical tradition? Is this work extending theory? revising it? testing it? corroborating it? Building emancipatory social theory requires a ceaseless confrontation with and respect for the experiences of people in their daily lives to stymie the tendency toward theoretical imposition inherent in theoretically guided empirical work. A systematized reflexivity which gives some indication of how a priori theory has been changed by the logic of the data is needed to establish construct validity in ways that will contribute to the growth of illuminating and change-enhancing social theory.

-Kidder's argument (1982) for a new respect for face validity becomes important here. Face validity historically has been treated lightly and dismissed, but Kidder argues that it is much more complex and is essentially tied to construct validity. "Research with face validity provides a 'click of recognition' and a 'yes, of course,' instead of 'yes, but' experience" (p. 56). Face validity is operationalized by recycling description, emerging analysis, and conclusions back through at least a subsample of respondents: "good research at the non-alienating end of the spectrum. . . goes back to the subject with the tentative results, and refines them in light of the subjects' reactions" (Reason and Rowan, 1981, p. 248). The reality of false consciousness means that limiting analyses to actors' perceptions of their situations is inadequate. There are, hence, limits on the degree to which "member checks" (Guba and Lincoln, 1981) can help establish data validity. Perhaps, like reliability within positivism, building face validity into our research designs could become a necessary but not sufficient approach to establishing data credibility.

-Finally, given the emancipatory intent of praxis-oriented research, I argue for the importance of catalytic validity (Reason and Rowan, 1981, p. 240; Brown and Tandom, 1978), the degree to which the research process re-orients, focuses and energizes participants toward what Freire terms conscientization, knowing reality in order to better transform it (1973). Of the guidelines proposed here, this is by far the most unorthodox as it flies directly in the face of the essential positivist tenet of researcher neutrality. My argument is premised not only on a recognition of the inherent reality-altering impact of the research process itself (we are, after all, studying not a phenomenon but a phenomenon being studied), but also on the possibilities for consciously channeling this impact so that respondents gain self-understanding and, ideally, self-determination through research participation.

My concern is that efforts to produce social knowledge useful in the struggle for a more equitable world must pursue rigor as well as relevance. By arguing for a more systematic approach to triangulation and reflexivity, a new emphasis for face validity, and inclusion of the new concern of catalytic validity, I stand opposed to those who hold that empirical accountability is either impossible to achieve or able to be side stepped in openly value-based, advocacy research. Disconcern with data credibility within praxis-oriented research programs will not improve the chances for the increased legitimacy of the knowledge they produce. Agreed upon procedures are needed which can make empirical decision-making public and, hence, subject to criticism. Most importantly, if we fail to do so, our efforts toward praxis will suffer as we fail to protect our work from our own passions.

Reason and Rowan's call for "a new rigor of softness" (1981, p. 490), a "validity of knowledge in process" (p. 250), an "objective subjectivity" (p. xiii) may be the best that we can do. But let us begin to move toward that.

## Conclusion

Foucault argues that this is a time of disturbing the formerly secure foundations of our knowledge and understanding, "not to substitute an alternative and more secure foundation, but to produce an awareness of the complexity, contingency and fragility of historical forms and events" (Smart, 1983, p. 76). Within this context, "what we know is but a partial and incomplete representation of a more complex reality" (Morgan, 1983, p. 389). Such understandings move us into what Huberman and Miles, self-termed "closet psychometricians" that they are (1984, p. 20), term a fluid, pioneering era where the need is to experiment, document and share.

My argument is for no new orthodoxy but rather for a sense of fertile, exploratory methodological pluralism. To quote Morgan one last time, "I have attempted to offer an approach that is antifoundational and is content to see social science develop in many different, and indeed contradictory, directions in the hope that new and more interesting ways of knowing will emerge" (1983, p. 405).

ENDNOTES

1. The title is the only place in this paper where I use the term "openly ideological" as I find "praxis-oriented" better describes the emergent paradigm I have been tracking over the last few years (Lather, 1984; Lather, 1985; Lather, forthcoming). "Openly ideological" invites comparisons with fundamentalist and conservative movements, whereas "praxis-oriented" clarifies the critical and empowering roots of a reseach paradigm openly committed to critiquing the status quo and building a more just society.

"Praxis-oriented" means "activities that combat dominance and move toward self-organizaton and that push toward thoroughgoing change in the practices of. . . the socal formation" (Benson, 1983, p. 338).

2. In an appendix to his Methodology for the Human Sciences (1983), Polkinghorne traces the history of the term "human science". He argues that "behavioral science" retains the spectre of behaviorism and its prohibition against including consciousness as a part of scientific study. "Social science" carries connotations of seeking a knowledge characteristic of the natural sciences in its law-seeking mode of inquiry. "Human science," he argues, is more inclusive, using multiple systems of inquiry, "a science which approaches questions about the human realm with an openness to its special characteristics and a willingness to let the questions inform which methods are appropriate" (p. 289).

3. I deal with the methodological implications of critical theory much more fully in Lather, "Research as Praxis," paper presented at the Curriculum Theorizing Conference, Dayton, Ohio, October, 1984, and "Empowering Research Methodologies," paper presented at AERA, Chicago, 1985.

4. Phrase used by Jean Anyon in a session of the American Educational Researchers' Association annual conference, Montreal, 1984.

5. Feminist empirical research in the human sciences is not a monolith. Some operates out of a conventional, positivist paradigm, some out of a interpretive/phenomenological paradigm, and an increasing amount of feminist research operates out of a critical, praxis-oriented paradigm concerned with producing both emancipatory knowledge and empowering the researched. See Miller (1986), Mies (1984), Bowles and Duelli-Klein (1983), Roberts (1981), and Westkott (1979).

6. It was actually French philosopher Gaston Bachelard who originated this concept of epistemological break, which Althusser then applied to the work of Marx. See D. Lecourt, Marxism and Epistemology:

Bachelard, Canguilhem and Foucault. London: NLB, 1975.

7. An example of debate about the "proper" relationship between theory and data can be found in Philip Cusick and Robert Everhart's reviews of one another's school ethnographies. Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 16(1), 1985. For rejoinders to one another, see 16(2), 1985, 246-248.

8. The inadequacies of an over-reliance on rationality in human behavior are eloquently captured in Carol Ascher's letter to Simone de Beauvoir, a letter written to "clear the air" after Ascher had written a biography of de Beauvoir: "I don't think you ever grasped sufficiently the way the unconscious can hold one back from grasping a freedom consciously chosen. Too often I see your sense of freedom being based on a rationalism that denies that murky inner world over which we have as little, or much, control as the world outside us. And, in fact, control would be your word, not mine. For I believe we have to love this deep inner self and try to be in harmony with it" (Between Women, Carol Ascher, L. De Salivo, S. Ruddick (Eds.). Boston: Beacon Press, 1984, p. 93). See, also, Sandra Harding, "Is Gender a Variable in Conceptions of Rationality?" Dialectica, 36, 1982, 225-242.

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